



October 23, 2008

Cheryl L. King, AICP
Staff Director
Transit Planning Board
245 Peachtree Center Ave NE
Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. King:

Last fall, I called for a "Marshall Plan for Transportation" for the State of Georgia. Today, for the first time, I see an important strategic blueprint that will help achieve the transit objectives for that plan for Gwinnett and the Atlanta region.

On behalf of the more than 7,200 members of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce representing a combined employment of more than 750,000 employees and more than \$200 billion in revenue, we join our partners at the County in wholeheartedly endorsing the Transit Planning Board's Concept 3 regional transit system as a consensus vision and guiding document for future transit investment in the Atlanta region.

We also encourage the region's planning and implementation partners to facilitate construction and operation of Concept 3 and encourage all chambers of commerce in the metro Atlanta region to join us in supporting Concept 3 as adopted by TPB and work collaboratively to support its implementation.

Between 2000 and the latest data available in 2006, Gwinnett County has led the region in job creation adding more than 30,000 net new jobs. Our population also led the region adding nearly 152,000 new people between 2000 and 2007. Today, Gwinnett's population is larger than four states and would make Gwinnett the 16th largest city in the United States, just behind San Francisco, CA. Our peer counties are also witnessing similar growth.

Despite our local SPLOST efforts which have allowed Gwinnett County to move forward with projects even with federal and state funding cutbacks, our transportation network has not kept up with the times or the demand. We believe a unified vision for public transportation is needed now more than ever. Working with our partners at GDOT, ARC, GRTA, MARTA and others to develop this plan is a critical first step.

In addition to the growth we are seeing, each of Gwinnett's unique cities and towns and our three CIDs are also experiencing a renaissance in their downtowns and activity centers that are creating world-class live, work, play communities that can be further enhanced by this vision.

Finally, the Gwinnett Chamber's Strategic Leadership Visits designed to learn best practices from similar fast-growing affluent communities like Fairfax County, VA, Collin County, TX, and Wake County, NC, also clearly showed us the importance of regional planning and vision when it comes to transportation.

To keep the metro Atlanta and Georgia's Innovation Crescent regions globally competitive with those communities mentioned above and others around the world, we need a vision like Concept 3 and the time to act is now.

Sincerely,

Jim Maran
President & CEO